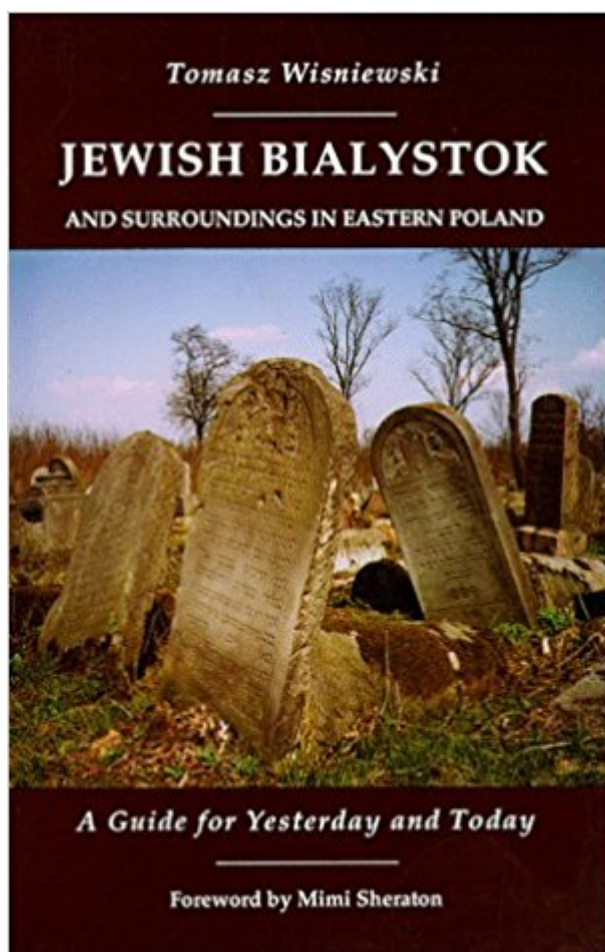


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Jewish Bialystok And Surroundings In Eastern Poland



Synopsis

Book by Wisniewski, Tomasz, Elliott, Ellen, Elliott, David

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English (translation) Original Language: Polish

This book is both a travel guide and an informative short history of the Jewish experience in and around Bialystok, Poland (near Belarus). I recently journeyed to Bialystok with it as my guidebook. If you are thinking about going on a similar journey, this book is absolutely essential as both a guide (be sure to go on the walking tour of Bialystok) and as background reading. Even if you are not planning a trip, I still recommend this book for its rich collection of old photographs and lucid historical discussions. Since the Nazis so effectively erased most signs of the Jews in Poland (and the communists erased some of what remained), this book is like a treasure map. Wisniewski identifies every memorial plaque, grave, and building that was once connected to the Jewish community in Bialystok and about 30 smaller communities. Each description is accompanied by a short discussion of the relevant history. Unlike guides that only describe what is visible, in 'Jewish Bialystok,' when there is nothing left (or next to nothing), Wisniewski informs the reader what happened before, during and after WWII. My sole criticism is that the directions are often vague and the maps inadequate. These shortcomings were more than made up by the wealth of information Wisniewski provides about each town and village. The book also includes sources for additional historical and geneological information. I can trace my roots back to the area but was unfamiliar with

much of the local history, so I thoroughly enjoyed the book and will recommend it to others interested in Jewish life before the Holocaust.

I wrote a longer review for the Narewka mailing list I run, if you want to join send a blank message to narewka-subscribe@j-geek.org. Finally this Shabbat we received the long awaited Bialystok book (Jewish Bialystok and Surroundings in Eastern Poland, by Tomasz Wisniewski), I spent one afternoon on Succot reading it. The book was small only 147 pages and I was able to read half of it in one afternoon. It is well written and provides a good insight into how people must have lived in the region. It also inspired my father and I to want to visit the area, perhaps in the next year. The 'chapter' on Narewka was brief, about three pages.

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